

else in the city, including in other federal buildings. However, USRC has asked the District of Columbia for a reduced Possessory Interest Tax assessment, a tax levied by the District on private businesses located in federal buildings. Yet USRC was given authority under the Union Station Redevelopment Act to negotiate lease agreements in this valuable property in order to ensure that the needs of Union Station would be covered, but USRC has negotiated a master retail lease that obligated USRC to pay half of any Possessory Interest Tax, thereby depriving USRC of significant funds that could be used for station maintenance and improvements. USRC says that its payment of the Possessory Interest Tax would hinder its mission of maintaining and preserving Union Station. The amount of the Possessory Interest Tax is small compared to Union Station's needs and casts further doubt about USRC's ability to meet its congressional mandate to make Union Station self-sustaining.

Although USRC was created in 1984 to ensure that Union Station would be self-sustaining, it is impossible for Congress or the public to gauge the health and progress of USRC without a proper audit. Particularly today, when there are no federal funds to rehabilitate Union Station, as Congress provided before, it is essential that we have a definitive and continuing view of the financial viability of Union Station, beginning with a full annual audit that is made available to Congress and to the public.

Major planned development, ongoing negotiations on the intercity bus deck and questions about USRC's maintenance and needed improvements for Union Station make an official annual audit essential. With nearly 90,000 visitors passing through Union Station every day, Congress is obligated to track the financial condition of this great asset in order to protect the significant federal investment and to avoid another cycle of the disrepair that once led to the closure of the facility. The only responsible course is to require a full annual and public audit of this historic federal property.

CONGRATULATING GLEN HAEGE,
"AMERICA'S MASTER HANDY-
MAN", ON HIS INDUCTION INTO
THE MICHIGAN BROADCASTING
HALL OF FAME

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House Floor today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to a wonderful Michigander who is commonly referred to as "America's Master Handyman". When you think of home improvement shows in Detroit, Michigan, one might be quick to mention the popular TV sitcom of the 1990s, "Home Improvement" which featured Michigan native Tim Allen as Tim "The Toolman" Taylor. As you know, this was a fictional show and character. But what I bet many didn't realize is this: there is a real home improvement expert who does exist in Detroit and has had one of the most successful careers long before Tim Allen hit our TV screens.

His name, Mr. Speaker, is Glen Haege, known quite simply as "America's Master Handyman". His name might sound familiar if you are or know someone who is a "do-it-yourselfer". Glen is a nationally renowned radio talk show host, television personality, author, and columnist. He offers people advice with any type of home improvement project and has an uncanny ability to answer any question posed to him. Not even the Toolman's right-hand man, Al Borland, could hold a hammer to him.

Glen's training in the home improvement business started at the retail level where he worked as a store manager and a corporate manager. But Glen was a man destined for much larger audiences.

His extraordinary talents recently earned him the very prestigious award presented by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters for his lifetime of accomplishments: Glen was inducted into the Michigan Broadcasting Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to put this prestigious award into perspective. Mr. Haege joins the ranks of the late great Detroit Tigers Broadcaster and Major League Hall of Famer, Ernie Harwell, and the company of other outstanding individuals who have made a long and lasting impact on the industry and whose talents are never to be forgotten. He shares this rare distinction with people like Bob Reynolds, Mike Whorff, Dick Purtan, Ray Lane, Diana Lewis, Mort Crim, Bill Bonds, Sonny Eliot and J.P. McCarthy just to name a few.

Glen's broadcasting career started in 1983 by making appearances on several Detroit radio and TV shows offering insightful home maintenance techniques to those seeking assistance. These appearances catapulted Glen to a new job hosting his own radio show in 1987. He soon began taking on even more responsibilities as magazine writer and columnist for the Detroit News. Glen's polite, courteous and genuine caring personality allowed him to add listeners and their trust to his ever-expanding and popular show, and more and more readers to his columns.

Eventually in 1996, his show became nationally syndicated and was one the best known home improvement shows in the country. His current program on WJR 760-AM, "The Handyman Show with Glenn Haege", reaches over 1.3 million listeners a week and airs on 150 radio stations across the U.S.

In addition to his own radio program, Glen stays extremely busy with the little spare time he has by producing television shows, appearing on other radio stations offering free advice and tips, attending home improvement conferences, authoring books, and serving as President and CEO of his own business, H&S Services. Yet he also finds the time to maintain his own website that helps him reach out to even more people seeking guidance on their home improvement projects.

Glen is a great teacher and his considerable expertise helps countless people save time and money, inspires them to believe they can be "do-it-yourselfers" while also cautioning them that sometimes professionals are indeed the best option.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Mr. Glen Haege on this most recent recognition as he joins the 2011 Class in the Michigan Broadcasting Hall of Fame. I am very happy to see his hard work, dedication and commitment officially recognized by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters.

Lastly, I want to personally congratulate Glen on this notable achievement and thank him on behalf of the scores of people he has helped by converting their homes into more comfortable, efficient and beautiful living spaces. We are very fortunate indeed to have this outstanding man living in our magnificent state, and I am very proud to call him my constituent and friend.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH
COUNTRYMAN

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Joe Countryman as he retires from his position as President of MBK Engineers. Through his work as an expert engineer, he has protected numerous regions of California, including Sacramento and the Central Valley, from flooding. Over the last 45 years, his engineering excellence has safeguarded the lives, homes and businesses of millions of Californians. I ask all my colleagues to join me today in honoring a true leader of the Sacramento community.

In the Sacramento area, flooding is of paramount concern to all of us. Joe's work has been crucial to protecting us from disaster, first as a senior civilian at the Army Corps of Engineers and then as the President of MBK Engineers. In 1986, during the historic storms, he managed the Folsom Reservoir flood operations for the Army Corps of Engineers. His decisions and resolve helped avoid a potential disaster for hundreds of thousands of residents in Sacramento along the American River, as a catastrophic flood threatened our dams and levees. Since then, he has worked to improve flood control operations at Folsom Reservoir, Oroville Dam, Shasta Dam, and other critically important sites across the Western United States. He has been influential in countless other projects not only in California, but also in Nevada, Utah, and Colorado.

Since I was elected, I have turned to Joe for his advice on a number of flood protection projects. Mr. Countryman is known not only for his incredible work in his field, but for his integrity and ability to communicate complex engineering and hydraulic information to the public. He has received many honors, including the Award of Merit from San Jose State University, the Commander's Award for Distinguished Service by the Army Corps of Engineers, and the American Society of Civil Engineers' Region 9 Lifetime Achievement Award. He is a member of the American Society of Engineers, the Flood Plain Managers Association, the Environmental and Water Resources Institute, and has been acknowledged as a Diplomate Water Resources Engineer for the American Academy of Water Resources Engineers.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize and thank Joe Countryman for his remarkable service not only to Sacramento, but to many other communities throughout the nation, and for his innovation and accomplishments in the field of engineering. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Countryman on his service and retirement. His expertise will certainly be missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 307 I was delayed in leaving a meeting with a constituent off the House floor during this two minute votes series and was unable to cast my vote before the vote was closed. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE
NOMINATION OF REBECCA
WODDER**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern regarding the recent nomination of Rebecca Wodder as Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Until recently, Ms. Wodder served as president of American Rivers, an environmental organization that specializes in the removal of dams across the United States. Under the direction of Ms. Wodder, American Rivers removed over 200 dams in 13 states from 1999 to 2010. In total, the organization claims credit for the removal of 150 dams across America. In many cases, the lawsuits that preceded the removal of these dams cost U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars. This clearly demonstrates that Ms. Wodder's agenda hinges on practices that result in the expenditure of vast amounts of federal time and money in exchange for the promotion of an environmental agenda that has shown questionable results.

The Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks oversees and coordinates all policy decisions made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service. For someone who has spent much of her career battling the very agencies she will control, this is a prime example of the fox guarding the hen house. Indeed, American Rivers touts the fact that they have "secured the planned removal of more than 100 dams on some 55 rivers in the next five years." I doubt very seriously whether Ms. Wodder will conduct an unbiased assessment on the merits of these and other projects during her tenure at the Interior Department.

American Rivers is currently party to seven lawsuits against American taxpayers and the federal government. At a time when Congress is attempting to get our fiscal house in order, we do not need a litigious leader who has brought millions of dollars in lawsuits against our government.

Furthermore, many Americans living along rivers depend on them to support their livelihoods. During this summer alone, flooding has caused insurmountable damage to these communities. If we are going to expend capital on our inland waterways, Congress and the Obama Administration should be focused on maintaining flood control and preserving valuable river infrastructure, not increasing the disparity of funding between fish and wildlife conservation measures and human protection.

The protection of wildlife is a valid concern that should be addressed in a thoughtful manner. However, when efforts to protect wildlife result in irresponsible policy decisions, we must take a stand for the safety of our constituents.

I was proud to join 38 of my colleagues from all corners of this country in sending the following letter to the Senate. In light of not only the country's current financial crisis but also devastating floodwaters that continue to batter our river communities, I urge all of my colleagues in the House and the Senate to carefully consider the nomination of Rebecca Wodder as Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The consequences for millions of Americans could be dire.

Hon. BARBARA BOXER,

Hon. JEFF BINGAMAN,

Hon. JAMES INHOFE,

Hon. LISA MURKOWSKI.

DEAR SENATORS: As you consider President Obama's nomination of Ms. Rebecca Wodder as Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior, we respectfully write to let you know of our serious concerns with her record as the head of American Rivers, a single-purpose interest group focused on litigating against the federal government and removing economically important infrastructure. We seriously question whether she could adequately represent broader and more balanced interests at the federal level, especially at a fragile economic time with national unemployment exceeding nine percent.

The position for which Ms. Wodder has been nominated oversees the management of at least 180 million federal acres and would have a direct influence on current and potential federal regulations impacting private lands, water rights, energy projects and other infrastructure. This is troubling given her past activities at the Wilderness Society and American Rivers, a non-governmental organization with a long record of receiving American taxpayer dollars while actively litigating against the federal government on multiple fronts. Between 1988 and 2011, American Rivers has either sued or been a party to 150 lawsuits against various parties, mostly the federal government. In fact, American Rivers is currently party to seven lawsuits against American taxpayers and the federal government.

One illuminating piece of litigation revolves around American Rivers' long-standing lawsuit against the federal government's operation of four multi-purpose dams in the Pacific Northwest. These dams, located on the lower Snake River in Washington state, provide multiple benefits including emissions-free, renewable hydroelectricity (enough power to serve a city the size of Seattle), navigation to deliver agricultural products to market, recreation and the good-paying jobs associated with these benefits. Writing in the August 25, 2003 edition of *The Dissident Voice*, Ms. Wodder wrote that "Breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River would be the single most effective way to bring back wild salmon." This is a completely unproven statement and the reality is breaching these dams is an extreme action that would have devastating economic impacts across an entire region while not actually assisting fish recovery. Despite broad agreement, including from the Obama Administration, on a biological opinion for Columbia Basin salmon recovery, Ms. Wodder's organization continues an over decade long lawsuit campaign against the federal government in an effort to demolish these dams.

There are numerous examples of how the policies advocated by Ms. Wodder at Amer-

ican Rivers will have serious impacts throughout the country. First, she effectively advocated for federal regulations that caused up to 40 percent unemployment in parts of the San Joaquin Valley, California by diverting farm water under the guise of protecting the Delta smelt, a three-inch fish. Second, she endorsed last Congress' controversial legislation (H.R. 5088 and S. 787) that many argued could allow the EPA to regulate street and gutter water run-off and man-made ditches. This could cause significant job loss throughout rural America and the National Association of Counties, a non-partisan entity composed of locally elected officials, was concerned that this legislation could lead to "more court cases" and federal groundwater regulation. Third, by naming the Susquehanna River as one of "America's most endangered rivers," her organization attempted to stifle the domestic production of affordable natural gas through hydraulic fracturing.

Furthermore, we are also concerned that this appointment may run afoul of President Obama's own goal of ensuring that political appointees would not work on regulations or contracts directly and substantially related to their prior employer. Ms. Wodder has received significant, long-term compensation during her tenure at American Rivers. As previously noted, the organization currently has numerous pending lawsuits against the very agencies over which she would have regulatory authority and for others that directly or indirectly have been involved in litigation with the Interior Department. This creates a very real and serious conflict of interest.

As Members of the House of Representatives, we appreciate the unique role of the Senate in the confirmation process. Nonetheless, the policies advocated by this nominee would be so detrimental to jobs, our economy and the livelihood of rural Americans that we felt compelled to make our views known and ask that you take them into consideration.

Sincerely,

BLAINE LUETKEMEYER.

DROUGHT IN THE HORN OF
AFRICA**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, the people of the Horn of Africa are facing a devastating crisis. A severe drought has left millions of children, women, and men in Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti malnourished. Many are on the verge of starvation. According to the World Food Program, more than 11 million people in the Horn of Africa require food assistance due to the drought.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) reports that below-normal spring rains in the eastern Horn of Africa led to below-normal harvests and shortages of water and grazing resources for livestock. Livestock health has deteriorated markedly, and milk production has declined significantly. Food prices throughout the eastern Horn of Africa continued to rise during the month of June, contributing to food insecurity for the population.

The conditions in Somalia are especially severe. According to the Famine Early Warning